

Event aims to help contractors find government work

By CARLOS RICO, The Daily Transcript

Tuesday, February 3, 2009

In an effort to help women, minority and small businesses receive government work, the city of San Diego's Equal Opportunity Contracting program will host the Building Profitable Relationships 2009.

More than 30 government, public and construction agencies will gather Thursday at the Balboa Park Club to educate contractors looking to be awarded government work and inform them about some of their projects coming up for bid.

"This is valuable information for any contractor that wants to get into government work," said Rachel Laing, spokesperson for Mayor Jerry Sanders, who will be a keynote speaker at the event.

"One of the barriers (for contractors) is not knowing what government agencies are looking for and this event will help kick-start talks to help contractors learn the different procedures from the public and private sector," Laing said.

The event, running from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., will include an open area where attendees will be able to visit with the various agencies and talk to them about upcoming projects up for bid.

Some of these agencies include SANDAG, Caltrans, the San Diego County Water Authority, the San Diego Regional Airport Authority and the San Diego Community College District.

There will also be construction organizations and companies with booths set up to assist and answer questions about what they have to offer. Some of these include the Associated Builders and Contractors, Johnson Electric and Helix Environmental Planning.

"We want to outreach to women and minorities and those that may not have the opportunity to talk to the bigger name contractors and give them a chance to network," Laing said.

The business event will also consist of four separate discussion panels.

Two will be in the morning and will be on "Getting Your Business in Shape -- Insurance, Bonds and Securing Capital" and "Getting the Help You Need --Competing Successfully." These get under way at 10:30 a.m.

In the afternoon, discussions will focus on doing business and how to get a contract with the city of San Diego, at 2 p.m., and other area agencies starting at 1:15 p.m.

Also in attendance will be city of San Diego CFO Jay Goldstone, San Diego Urban League CEO Ray King and Reuben R. Garcia, San Diego Small Business Administration district director.

Everyone who attends will receive a resource directory with all the contact information for the agencies and companies that attend.

The San Diego Contracting Opportunities Center is also working with the city to put this event together.

"Government work is out there, and there will be even more if the city gets some of the money from a stimulus package," Laing said.